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**VICE PRESIDENT GORE, TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY PEÑA
USHER IN NEW ERA FOR TRAVEL, TIME SAVINGS AND COMMUNICATIONS
WITH GLOBAL POSITIONING SATELLITE SYSTEM**

With the signing of a Presidential Decision Directive allowing the civilian and commercial use of the Global Positioning System (GPS), Vice President Al Gore and Transportation Secretary Federico Peña today ushered in a new era of travel, timesavings and communication.

President Clinton's directive assures that GPS will be available for consumers and business use. GPS is a satellite-based radionavigation system originally employed by the Department of Defense that now is increasingly put to use by motor carriers, rail and transit systems, airlines and commercial shippers worldwide to track vehicles and goods and provide highly accurate three-dimensional position, velocity and time.

The U.S. is already a world leader in developing GPS technology, equipment and services, Secretary Peña said at a White House event with the Vice President. The global market for GPS equipment and services will result in the creation of as many as 100,000 new, high-tech jobs by the year 2000, with annual sales of more than \$8 billion.

"Today starts a new era for transportation companies, for their customers and for the American traveling public," Secretary Peña said. "The birth of this new industry will completely transform the way we live from driving to work, to delivering a package, to responding to an emergency. GPS will have profound effects on everyday life, saving people time, cutting costs and giving people mobility and choices that they never had before.

"Most people don't know what GPS is," Secretary Peña said. "Five years from now, Americans won't know how we ever lived without it. GPS will change the way we live in the way cellular phones, fax machines and the Internet have impacted daily life."

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Peña cited GPS examples of navigation systems in cars that will provide current traffic information and directions, eliminating the need for a map. He added that in an automobile accident, a car's cellular phone could automatically call for help and an emergency vehicle would be dispatched, saving time and lives. A blind person walking down city streets could wear a GPS receiver that would provide accurate locations and directions.

Wide-ranging uses of GPS include law enforcement, such as tracking stolen vehicles; predicting weather; monitoring earthquakes; and recreational activities such as hiking and taking measurements at sporting events.

Secretary Peña said all modes of transportation will rely on GPS:

- In January, the U.S. Coast Guard declared its GPS augmentation system operational at many U.S. ports, providing mariners precise navigation signals for safer and more accurate harbor entry for ships.
- The Federal Aviation Administration is developing augmentation systems to permit use of GPS for aviation en-route and precision approach. Satellite-based control of air traffic will increase system capacity and reduce delays while maintaining system safety.
- GPS is a critical component of Secretary Peña's "Operation Timesaver" goal to have 75 U.S. metropolitan areas develop intelligent transportation infrastructure. The Federal Highway Administration, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Federal Railroad Administration and Federal Transit Administration are planning to incorporate GPS into traffic management centers, buses and emergency response systems.
- Data on the location and speed of trains to improve safety, allow better management of operations and increase capacity and efficiency. The Federal Railroad Administration is funding demonstration projects of GPS applications for positive train control.

"The President's action assures the continued growth of GPS as the standard guidance system for all modes of transportation -- aviation, highway, maritime, rail and mass transit -- and other civil uses, thus providing a giant leap ahead in safety and efficiency," Secretary Peña said.

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